

FIREBREAK AND FUEL LOAD NOTICE



Bush Fires Act 1954

Section 33

Notice to all owners and occupiers of land situated within the Shire of Mundaring

Pursuant to *section 33(1)* of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the Shire of Mundaring (the Shire) gives notice that the owners and/or occupiers of land district are required to undertake the following works on land owned or occupied by them. This must be done by 1 November each year and maintained until 31 March the year following.

DEFINITIONS WITHIN THIS NOTICE

Authorised Officer - means an employee of the Shire appointed as a Bush Fire Control Officer pursuant to the powers conferred in *section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954*.

Trafficable - means to be able to travel from one point to another in an emergency services vehicle on a clear surface, unhindered, without any obstruction that may endanger such vehicles. It must not terminate, lead to a dead end, or have any pinch points without provision for egress to a safe place or a cleared turnaround area of not less than an 18-metre diameter.

Inflammable Material - means any substance which will catch fire easily without contact with flames or with a low ignition point, such as but not limited to petrol or liquefied petroleum gas.

Fuel Depot / Fuel Storage Area - means an area of land, a building or a structure where fuel, i.e. (petrol, diesel, kerosene, liquid gas or any other fossil fuel) is kept in any container or vessel.

Flammable Material - means any fine fuels, plant, tree, grass, substance, object, thing or material that may or is likely to catch fire and burn or any other thing deemed by an Authorised Officer to be capable of combustion.

Vertical Clearance - means a continuous, uninterrupted vertical line at a right angle to the horizontal baseline of the firebreak to a minimum height of 4 metres from the ground.

Firebreak - means a strip or area of ground, with a minimum width of 3 metres and a vertical clearance of 4 metres, immediately inside all external boundaries of any lot and constructed to a trafficable surface that is kept and maintained totally clear of all flammable material and includes the pruning and removal of any living or dead trees, scrub or any other material encroaching onto it or into the vertical clearance of the firebreak area. Firebreaks may be constructed by one or more of the following methods: Ploughing, Cultivating, Scarifying, Raking, Burning, Chemical Spraying, Blowing or other methods as approved by an Authorised Officer

Fuel Loads

Fine Fuel Loads - means the leaf litter on the ground, including leaves, twigs (up to 6mm in diameter) and bark. A fine fuel load depth of 5mm from the top of the layer to the mineral earth beneath indicates approximately 2 tonnes per hectare. A fine fuel load depth of 15mm from the top of the layer to the mineral earth beneath indicates approximately 8 tonnes per hectare.

Coarse Fuel Loads - means branches, logs etc.

Maintaining Fuel Loads - relates to managing fuel loads described in this Notice. Reducing fuel load levels does not necessarily require the removal of existing natural vegetation. A combination of methods can be utilised, including planned burning, raking, weed removal, pruning and/or removing dead plant material.

Managed Vegetation - includes vegetation that is pruned away from buildings, under pruned to minimise contact with ground fuels, and that is kept free of dead suspended matter such as twigs, leaves and bark.

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Habitable Buildings - means any building or other dwelling suitable for human residency, occupation, or use. This includes attached or adjacent structures such as garages, carports, verandas, or similar roofed structures that are attached to, or within 6 metres, of the dwelling or primary building.

Asset Protection Zone (APZ) - is an area of very low fuel levels surrounding a habitable building extending to a minimum of 20 metres out from any external walls of the building, attached structures, or adjacent structures within 6 metres of that building. On sloping ground, it shall increase at 1 metre for every degree in slope on the sides of the habitable building that are exposed to downslope natural vegetation.

1. The Land owner (or occupier) is required to do the following

1.1 All land with an area of 5000sqm up to 50,000sqm (5 Hectares) with a building on it must

- a) Maintain all grass on the land to a height no greater than 5cm
- b) Install a firebreak around all structures outside of your APZ and immediately inside all external boundaries of the land
- c) Maintain fuel loads in natural bush areas at less than 8 tonnes per hectare across the land.
- d) Maintain an APZ in line with the requirements of section 1.5 of this Notice

1.2 All land with an area of 50,000sqm or greater, with a building on it must

- a) Maintain all grass to a height no greater than 5cm for a distance of 10m from any firebreak.
- b) All other grasses within the area must be managed by slashing or effective grazing by livestock or as directed by an Authorised Officer.
- c) Install a firebreak around all structures outside of your APZ and immediately inside all external boundaries of the land.
- d) Maintain fuel loads in natural bush areas at less than 8 tonnes per hectare across the land.
- e) Maintain an APZ in line with the requirements of section 1.5 of this Notice

1.3 All land with an area of 5,000sqm or less, with a building on it must

- a) Maintain all grass on the land to a height no greater than 5cm
- b) Maintain fuel loads in natural bush areas at less than 8 tonnes per hectare across the land.
- c) Maintain an APZ in line with the requirements of section 1.5 of this Notice

1.4 All vacant land with an area less than 2000sqm

Must ensure all grass be maintained on the land to a height no greater than 5cm and that fuel loads in natural bush areas are maintained to less than 8 tonnes per hectare across the land.

All vacant land with an area more than 2000sqm must

- a) Install a firebreak immediately inside all external boundaries of the land All land with an area of less than 50,000sqm (5 Hectares), all grass must be maintained on the land to a height no greater than 5cm
- b) All land with an area of 50,000sqm (5 Hectares) or greater, the grass must be maintained on the land to a height no greater than 5cm for a distance of 10 metres from any firebreak, and all other grasses managed by slashing or effective grazing by livestock or as directed by an Authorised Officer
- c) Maintain fuel loads in natural bush areas to less than 8 tonnes per hectare across the land.

1.5 Asset Protection Zone Specification

- a) Maintain all grass on the land to a height no greater than 5cm.
- b) Fuel loads maintained at 2 tonnes per hectare or lower.

- c) Clear separation between adjoining or nearby tree crowns
- d) Small group/s of trees within close proximity to one another may be treated as one crown provided the combined crowns do not exceed the area of a large or mature crown size for that species.
- e) No trees/shrubs over 2 metres high are to be within 2 metres of a habitable building.
- f) Trees and shrubs must be under-pruned to a minimum height of 2 metres from the ground.
- g) Shrubs over 2 metres high must not be planted in groups close to habitable buildings, ensuring there is a gap of at least three times the height (at maturity) of the shrub away from habitable buildings.
- h) Ensure no part of a tree overhangs any buildings.
- i) Roofs, gutters, and walls of all buildings on the land are free of fine fuel loads and other flammable material.
- j) Ensure paths and non-flammable features immediately adjacent to habitable buildings are installed.
- k) Wood piles and flammable materials are stored a safe distance from habitable buildings.
- l) Ensure roofs, gutters, and walls of all buildings on the land are free of flammable matter, for example, the accumulation of leaves in gutters, wood piles against building walls and flammable/inflammable materials against that building or stored under pole-framed houses.

1.6 Fuel Depot /Storage Area, Haystacks / Stockpiled Flammable Material

- a) Remove all flammable material within 10 metres of where it is stored.
- b) Install a firebreak immediately adjacent to any haystacks or stockpiled flammable material

1.7 Application to vary the above Requirements/Arrangements

An application to vary any of the above requirements can be made to the Shire to implement measures in the case of geographical or environmental obstructions. This will be assessed by an Authorised Officer, and will be granted for a time period as decided by the Authorised Officer assessing your application. If approved you must still comply with the other sections of this notice. If not approved, your property must still comply with this notice. Bushfire Management Plans, Bushfire Management Statements, or Fuel Load Management Plans, approved by the Shire to reduce and mitigate fire hazards within a particular subdivision, lot or other area of land anywhere in the district, are also included.

1.8 Additional Works

- a) All driveways must be clear of flammable material and accessible to allow for the safe access and egress of emergency services vehicles as deemed by the Authorised Officer.
- b) In addition to the requirements of this Notice, you may be required to carry out further works that are considered necessary by an Authorised Officer and specified by way of a separate written notice forwarded to the address of the owner/s as shown on the Shire rates record for the relevant land.

The Shire advises that its officers, servants, workmen, contractors, vehicles, machinery, and appliances (as the officers deem fit) may carry out the requisitions of this notice that are not complied with by the date specified above, and any costs and expenses incurred may be recovered from you as the owner and/or occupier of the land.

The penalty for failing or neglecting to comply with this Notice is a fine not exceeding \$5000, and a person in default is also liable, whether prosecuted or not, to pay the costs of performing the work directed by this Notice if it is not carried out by the owner and/or occupier by the date required by this Notice.



Supplementary requirements to this notice *section 24F and 24G (Restricted Burning) Burning of Garden Refuse*

- a) 1sqm piles of garden refuse may be burnt without a permit between 6 pm and 11 pm.
- b) No more than one pile of garden refuse is to be burnt at any one time.
- c) A permit to burn before 6 pm is required, and all permit conditions must be followed.
- d) One able-bodied adult person must be in attendance at all times or as specified on your permit.

The following requirements must be carried out by the responsible person in attendance

- Piles to be fully extinguished by midnight. Fully extinguished means no heat, smoke or steam, or white ash is to be present where the fire was situated.
- The persons responsible for the lighting of piles are required to check the Fire Danger Rating and weather conditions to ensure burning is allowed at that time.

If the requirements of this Notice are carried out by burning, such burning must be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

By order of the Council.



Jonathan Throssell
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER